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John Keane Society of Dauphin County, Pa. 1888, 1891
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AUTOBIOGRAPHY

— OF —

CAPTAIN JOHN KEAN

— OF —

HARRISBURG.

dam Annotated by
A. BOYD HAMILTON.

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HARRISBURG, PA.
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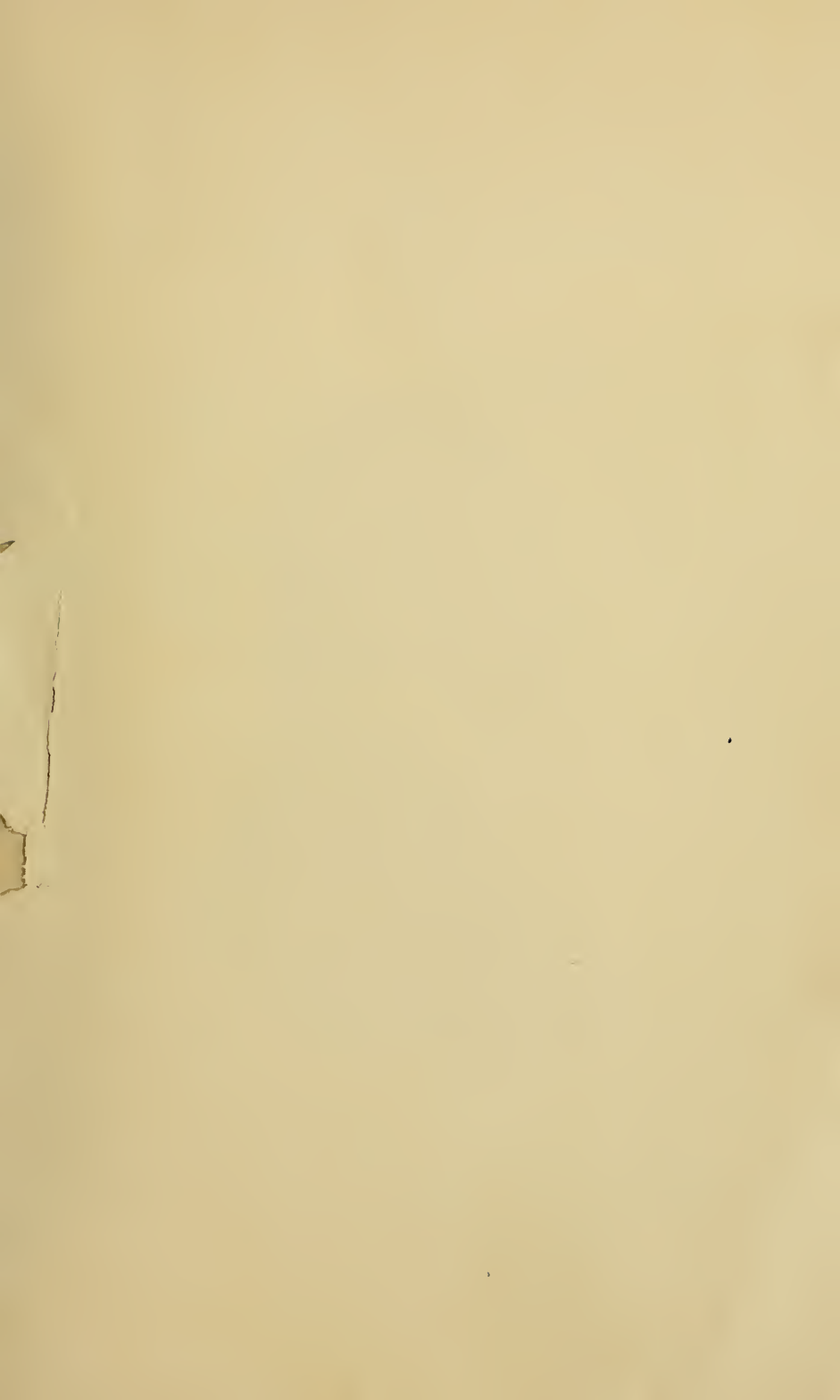
Dauphin County Historical Society.

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AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF JOHN KEAN.

I.

[A daughter of Judge Kean, some time before her death, placed the following in my hands, desiring that a copy of it, after arrangement, should be preserved in the library of the Dauphin County Historical Society. I was informed that the extracts were made at random, and without regard to order of time, from a much more extended and elaborate MSS. which it was intended should be destroyed. This appears to have been done, as no trace of the original could be found after her death. In preparing this interesting paper for printing and publication, a complete copy of the transcript handed to me is preserved for the use of local or general historians.

A. BOYD HAMILTON.]

Not from hope or wish to live in the registry of posterity; not from any desire to tell the world who or what I am or have been, but merely that my family and descendants, if any survive me, may be enabled to have a wish gratified, which has often obtruded itself on my mind, namely, a desire to know what kind of man my father was. No preface or apology is necessary, because I do not intend this shall ever be read by any other than my own near relations, who, with the mantle of friendship, will cover the errors from the public eye, and who will not find its recitations of sufficient value for the world to notice. A plain, unvarnished narrative of facts is all I shall attempt.

My father and mother were both natives of Ireland. They both at a very early age came to Pennsylvania and settled near Philadelphia. My mother's maiden name was Mary Dunlap. I was born in the city of Philadelphia on the third day of October, one thousand seven hundred and sixty-two, in a house a few doors south of Christ church, on Second street. I was sent to an English and mathematical school at Germantown, six miles from the city. I was consigned to the care of this teacher for the first rudiments of education, (1)

My father carried on business in the city of Philadelphia upon an extensive scale, engaged in shipping shoes and leather to Spanish ports and elsewhere. He was successful for a time, but when the storm of war commenced in 1774, he found a change, closed his accounts, paid his debts, and he and several others removed their families to Middletown, Dauphin County, Pennsylvania, in order to have them out of danger, while they returned and served as militia men when they were needed. He was a *captain* and almost always in active service, except when he had camp fever.

When in service, part of his time was occupied as guard to keep the British out of Philadelphia. As there was no money for expenses incurred by the soldiers, he advanced as much as he could spare, to assist in paying the men of his company. He was never repaid this loan, I do not suppose he expected to be. Instead he was given papers entitling him to wild land in Virginia. This land was not supposed to be worth looking after and its title lapsed for want of attention. He thought he had done his duty, and was willing to be poor for the cause of Liberty, and the safety of his adopted country.

Middletown was then, in 1774, a small village at the junction of the Susquehanna river and Swatara creek, in what is now Dauphin, but then was Lancaster county.

He sold his house and lot in Middletown in 1777, and also a farm he owned in Shearman's Valley, Cumberland county. He purchased a farm at the "Round Top," [near Middletown] living there several years. Sold that and bought a house and lot, in [what was afterwards] "Wormleysburg," in Cumberland county, lived there some time and then bought a lot and house on the corner of Walnut street and River alley, Harrisburg. He died there in 1801.

In 1779 being then 18 years of age, the time young men were enrolled in the militia, I was put on the roll for duty. In ten days thereafter I was called

to serve my country. My recollection is perfect, of the joy with which the tidings were received by me. We were soon fitted for the expedition, and our company, commanded by Capt. Robert McKee (2), marched to rendezvous. My joys were, however, embittered in seeing what a struggle it cost my parents to part with an only son, perhaps never to see him more. They, however, bid me go, telling me that it was the cause of God and my country, and that they trusted His all-protecting providence would restore me again to them in safety.

Soon after Gen. Washington was attacking Lord Cornwallis in Virginia, and had ordered a large detachment of the militia, to awe the British army in New York, to prevent them supporting Cornwallis in Virginia. This order did not reach our company for a long time, but as we went on we met parts of the detachment returning. We proceeded to the Delaware river, when we were ordered to take a number of prisoners from Philadelphia to Lancaster, and guard them there during our full tour of duty, which we did, but were therefore prevented from signalizing ourselves on the field of glory.

My parents were of the strictest order of the Covenanters. I was brought up in a pious and religious manner. I was astonished beyond measure at the wickedness and profanity of the world, but neither those with whom I was associated or the impetuosity of youth could make me entirely forget the sage maxims and prudent counsel received from my parents.

II.

My father placed me with a Mr. Clunie (3) in Hummelstown, Dauphin County, a storekeeper, with whom I continued to reside for two years. My salary was one hundred dollars per year and a suit of clothes, with my boarding. My employment was that of book keeper and store assistant. Being master of the German language was also of very great service to me. Mr. C. carried on an extensive business in which I found constant employment. Having by reading and industry acquired some knowledge of conveyancing, a knowledge much wanted in that part of the country, I determined to make my acquirements serviceable to the community and profitable to myself, by writing deeds, wills, mortgages, etc., which was done at night after the business of the day was over and very frequently employed me until midnight. By

this kind of industry my salary was more than doubled in clear cash.

In 1785, my old friend, Mr. Clunie, having been appointed by the Supreme Executive Council, excise officer for the county, at his request I undertook the duties as his Deputy at the county town. I removed to Harrisburg the 22d of April, 1785, where from the vast numbers of people crowding to this new place and no houses being yet erected, I was compelled to take lodgings with a Dr. Sterling a mile above town. In the beginning of June, 1785, I entered into partnership with Mr. Clunie in storekeeping at Harrisburg. We erected a house and in August opened shop—our sales quite equaled our expectation.

On the first of May, 1786, I married Mary Whitehill, daughter of the Honorable Robert Whitehill, (4) of Cumberland county. Before our honeymoon was ended, my fellow townsmen set about framing a system of police for the rising town and elected me a justice of the peace, an office altogether unthought of, not looked for, nor solicited by me; indeed, I knew nothing of the design until the evening of the election, on the 20th of June, 1786. I was, however, commissioned and entered upon the duties of the office. From this period I may date any troubles I have had in life, having been selected to office in preference to many others. As I could no longer attend the store, Mr. Clunie and myself dissolved partnership in the September following.

In December, 1786, having taken a house at the corner of Market and Second streets, I commenced a small store. Finding rents extravagantly high, we concluded to purchase. This purchase was a lot and small frame house on the corner of Walnut and Second streets, for one hundred and seventy-five pounds. To this we removed in April, 1787. In the fall of this year I was elected County Commissioner, in which office, by endeavoring to reform some abuses in the handling of public moneys, I raised a hornets' nest, which to this day has done me every mischief. I, however, persevered in the system which appeared best calculated for the interests of those who had appointed me, regardless of either praise or censure.

The adoption of the Federal Constitution about this time engaged the attention of every one who in any degree regarded the interests of his country. An acquaintance with Mr. ———, a gentleman in office, gave

me frequent opportunities of hearing his opinion on political subjects. I revered his talents and eagerly attended to his arguments, all of which went to prove that the members of the Convention aimed only to make a form of Government which should tend to aggrandize themselves. Of course when the new Constitution appeared I was prepared to view it with a scrutinizing eye. On first reading, the dreadful features predicted did not appear to be in it, but I saw parts ill calculated for the meridian of Pennsylvania. These I at once considered as international blemishes, never considering that to give and to take must alone be principles on which a Government could be formed to suit so wide extended a country as the United States, the inhabitants of which differed from each other widely in laws, manner, and religion. My political ideas of that time did not extend beyond the circle of Pennsylvania, and I absurdly thought that a Government suited to that State would be the form best suited to the whole Union. (5.) Experience has since taught me better, and although the Constitution of the United States has some defects, as no human work is without them, I now believe it to be the best form of Government upon earth, and better calculated to insure an equal participation of equal rights than any other form. My former sentiments of distrust of those who made it are changed into admiration of their wisdom and virtues.

In 1787 I lost my wife, and the course of my life was changed. I quit business and became deeply interested in the progress of schools, churches, fire companies, a library, improvement of streets and other needful improvements. (6) I sold my house for £482 and purchased between Chestnut street and Market Square, fronting on Second, for £510, one-half of which I conveyed a few days afterwards to Alexander Berryhill, Esq., (7) for £360 thus I had as good a lot as any. On the 10th of December, 1789, I was again married, to Jane Hamilton, daughter of Captain John Hamilton, one of the largest merchants in this part of Pennsylvania. This union has always been a great blessing to me, and I am sincerely thankful that it has been an unalloyed happiness to myself and my family.

I began to build in 1793, and in 1795 we removed into the new house. In 1792, without solicitation on my part, Governor Mifflin sent me a commission as associate judge. I never knew who to thank for this act of

friendship; the Governor did not know me, and some person must have recommended me to him. My legal qualifications were very inadequate to the proper discharge of the duties of my new station, but considering that a good exterior might be serviceable, I purchased a black suit and sixty dollars worth of law books. Nature had furnished me with a frowning look, which, with a black suit on, was construed into a wise one, and I did my duty as well as my associates.

* * * * *

In 1793 Harrisburg was visited with an epidemic disease much resembling yellow fever, which carried off great numbers. My worthy and good friend Mr. Hamilton was among the first to fall. I felt it most severely from a sincere affection for the man, I was his partner and son-in-law, and I say he was a first rate citizen, a perfectly upright and honest merchant, under a due sense of the responsibility of this opinion (8).

III.

In 1796, I entered into partnership with Mr. John Elder, (9) in the purchase of New Market Forge and lands, at the price of £22,000, four thousand to be paid in hand and one thousand pounds the first day of May following, the remainder in heavy payments in the spring of 1797. We took possession in 1797. I removed my family to the Forge. We were as industrious and attentive as men could be, but had clouds and difficulties to struggle with. I was still in the Senate. *

* * * * *

I determined never to run but willing to serve my constituents; and was re-elected in 1798 by a majority of 3,651 votes. I had still one year to serve of the period for which I was last elected, but was fully determined at the end of that period to retire and never again to be found in the walk of Legislative life. While under the influence of this determination, about the first of October, 1805, the Governor, Mr. McKean, sent for me and offered me the station of Registrar General of the accounts of the Commonwealth which after a few days hesitation I accepted, and on the 15th day of October, 1805, was commissioned and sworn into office in which capacity I yet serve, with no intention of remaining longer than the present Governor's term which expires in 1808. Having accepted the office of Registrar General, I began to do precisely what ought to have done make a calculation on the cost, I agreed

to take it. The salary was \$1,666 67. I could not remove the family to Lancaster, and live upon that salary—so fixed them at Palmyra, and betook myself to Lancaster, where I was very lonely, but was politely and hospitably welcomed.

In the year 1791 the Assembly appointed me, in conjunction with Robert Harris (10) and Michael Kapp (11), commissioners to build a court house and public offices at Harrisburg. This we undertook and completed. By the act of Assembly, which authorized the erection of the building, three thousand pounds were appropriated for that purpose, and our compensation for constructing and superintending was 6 per cent. on the moneys expended. About this time strong hopes were entertained that the seat of government would be removed to Harrisburg, and by the advice of almost everybody in the county we laid our plans so large as to accommodate the Legislature in case they should choose to remove to that place, and in consequence of this enlargement the building cost £5,327.49. My enemies immediately laid hold on this, and although [here are some names erased] had advised it, with many others, said I had squandered upwards of £2,000 of the public money. They carefully left out the name of Robert Harris, who went hand in hand with me in all this business. Mr. Kapp, the other, stood aloof and wished success to the prosecutors, for I had offended him by preventing him from being coroner when he ran for it.

This charge was handed to the court, who appointed auditors. The commissioners and grand jury had settled and approved the accounts, and from their knowledge of the trouble we had, allowed us two per cent. more on the monies expended over the £3,000 than had been allowed by the act on that sum. We had, in the course of the business, paid out considerable sums for which we had no vouchers; but had our accounts, and thus satisfied the commissioners that they had been really and necessarily expended, for which they allowed under the denomination of clerk hire 83 dollars. Both of these items the auditors struck off and ordered them to be refunded. I refused and the business was left to the court and a jury specially called for the purpose, who ordered us to repay two per cent. on the monies spent over £3,000 and the 83 Dollars which had been allowed for contin_{ent} expenses, *which we did*.

In the summer of 1794 we were proceed-

ing with building the Court House, when the inhabitants of the western part of the State exhibited symptoms of extreme dissatisfaction with the operations of the law of Congress for raising and collecting an internal excise. In Europe, from whence perhaps one-half of the inhabitants of Pennsylvania had emigrated, excise laws were extremely odious. They had been there engines of oppression in the hands of the Government, and the moneys raised by them had been seen and known to be principally wasted in the collection, and thus the mere tools and minions of arbitrary Governments were fattening on the spoils of the laboring and industrious. In addition to this, an attempt of the British ministry to lay an excise on the American Colonies had been the cause of the war, which terminated so gloriously in the independence of the United States. A knowledge of these things induced the people of Pennsylvania to hate the very name of Excise. They did not reflect on the difference between having indirect taxes of this description forced on them by an arbitrary master and of laying them on themselves through the medium of their own Representatives. I saw the rising dissatisfaction and viewed the probable event with horror in a Government framed by the people themselves. To oppose the operation of any law by force was folly in the extreme, and suggested to my mind fears that a Republican Government could not in any nation long exist. The coal of discord was blown by two descriptions of persons very different in their views and intentions. * * * * *

In addition to these two parties sounding the trumpet of discord, the sober but honest class of citizens had been alarmed at the official insolence displayed by the collectors, and by seeing men thrust into those employments whose honesty was doubted and whose poverty was conspicuous, but who now reveled in wealth which every body knew could not be their own. I at once perceived the propriety and necessity of supporting the Government, though I did not approve of the law, yet was determined to support it until we could have it regularly repealed by law. In this disposition, and with the most patriotic views, was I endeavoring to reason this folly down, when news arrived that the Western people were in arms, and opposed and maltreated some collectors. Nothing was now heard but drums and warlike preparations, drafts were ordered from the militia, and a formidable army was

forming to march against our deluded brethren of the west.

IV.

There were many in Dauphin county who approved the proceedings of the western people. * * * * Some persons inadvertently called a town meeting through the newspaper. I feared the result would be in favor of the insurgents, and therefore instantly drew up a set of resolutions approbatory of the measures of Government and breathing subordination to and promising support of the laws. With this I ran to almost all the inhabitants of the town who were called Democrats, requesting them to come to the meeting and showing them the necessity and propriety of adopting the resolutions I had in my hand. I at that time was captain of a volunteer artillery company consisting of about seventy men. They all assured me of their support, as did most of the others I had spoken with. I felt then satisfied, and waited for the time of meeting in full confidence of adding the declaration of Harrisburg in favor of law and good order. When the hour of meeting arrived and the people began to assemble, we found two firebrands with their party guarding the door and declaring the people should not meet. This was too much, and required some trouble to destroy the effects of such proceedings. Some moderate men prevented the parties from coming to blows, but no meeting was held.

I have been thus particular in this business because I was afterwards represented as a leader in the work of disorganization and opposition to the Government, than which nothing was further from my thought or intention. I considered that the political salvation of the country and its republican institutions depended upon an implicit and unqualified submission to the laws. If they were improper or injudicious, they must be submitted to until regularly repealed in the mode pointed out by the Constitution. To oppose the execution of them by force was anarchy, from which the transition was natural and easy to despotism. Here is a circumstance (I would not relate this, only to show the character of some persons we have to deal with in this world.) * * *

I heard my name mentioned, and heard the stranger say, "if it was not for that fellow we could rule the county, but his * * * * popularity destroys our cause." "Yes," said —, "I wish he was out of the way. It

would be doing God service. * * * * *

"I hope somebody will do it, for he is the idol of the people, and is still preaching Equality of Rights, which the mob were never made to enjoy. Let us either kill him or destroy his popularity by some means, or we shall never rise. After this pious conclusion, they went out of my hearing. At this time I was bail for — for upwards of 3,000 dollars. Such is this world's gratitude. "Hide me from the secret counsel of the wicked, from the insurrection of the workers of iniquity;" said Luther, "I could be proud upon it that I have a bad name among wicked men."

The militia were now marching in from all quarters on their route westward to quell the whisky insurrection. The court house building was progressing, and scaffold poles erected, on one of which the bricklayers, as is customary, hung a white flag or cloth. In the western counties the erection of flags had been a symptom of insurrection. This our bricklayers, I believe, had either never heard, or if they had did not think of. At all events it had no political reference. However my opponents no sooner saw it than they attacked me in the newspapers as the author and abettor of this monstrous symbol of sedition; but here they were wrong. I was not in the county when it was erected and to the best of my recollection the first notice I had of such a thing being in existence was by the newspaper in which a correspondent poured forth a torrent of abuse, and a newspaper war commenced in which I was so lucky as to make my opponents appear both wicked and ridiculous. The flag in question had been taken down and another substituted, which bore the inscription "Liberty and Equality." (12)

My antagonists, defeated in this attempt, had recourse to another and what they thought a sure expedient to effect my ruin. They waited upon General Proctor (13) and Col. Gurney (14), who were then in town with troops, and represented me as an enemy to the Government and supporter of this flag; that I had a number of men marshalled to oppose the army, and that an insurrection was as ripe in Harrisburg, under my direction, as it could be in the western counties. These officers heard the dreadful tale and ordered the flag immediately to be cut down and that I should be arrested; both of which were done, and I appeared before them as a prisoner. When I entered the room the officers appeared violently enraged. and in a

very harsh manner demanded what I had to say for myself; that they were creditably informed I was a notorious offender and insurgent. To be tried by a military tribunal; the thought was dreadful. I summoned resolution enough to tell my story—a plain, unvarnished narrative of facts. They listened with surprise, and when I had finished told me if I could substantiate what I had said they would dismiss me. I referred to the newspapers and a copy of the resolutions intended to have been offered at the meeting. These were produced by some respectable neighbors; which were no sooner read than I was discharged, after drinking some wine with the officers.

Thus another attempt, aimed even at my life, was baffled. I say aimed at my life, for sedition was by the law treason, and treason death. Previous to this my friends had often requested me to suffer my name to be run for the Legislature. I had always refused. After this usage, however, I became ambitious and wished to eclipse those who had thus troubled me, as well as to vindicate my character as an upright citizen. Thus it happened that in October, 1794, I was elected a Senator to represent the Berks and Dauphin district in the State Legislature.

V.

In 1793 and 1794, I had been appointed executor of several estates. The weight of the accounts lying still on my hands unsettled, required my continued attendance at Harrisburg much to the injury of my other business. This caused us to remove to Harrisburg, which we did in the spring of 1802. My business there was the settling of accounts of the estate of Capt. Hamilton and superintending of the property taken at the appraisement in the summer, and attending my legislative duties in the winter, for I was this fall elected for the third time to the Senate. In the course of this political contest my opponent, ———, aided by a band of office hunters, instigated one Benjamin Mayer (14), a German printer, to abuse me in his paper, which he did in a most unwarrantable manner, and for which I sued him. He was found guilty and fined. I also recovered 300 dollars damages from him, which I would not use, but when I removed to Palmyra I built a stone schoolhouse with it as far as it went, and finished it with my own money. [We had all the expenses of the

school house, but I used them to kindle the fire—J. D. K.] This, although taking vengeance on my enemies, was by no means satisfactory to me. I had spent the prime of my life in Harrisburg, and had upon all occasions done every thing in my power for the benefit of that place.

In the summer of 1803 we sold some part of the property which had belonged to my father-in-law's estate and purchased a house and nine acres of land in Palmyra, about three miles from the Forge, to which we removed in April, 1804, and here we again opened a store. In the winter following, I attended my duties as a Senator in perhaps as trying times as ever existed. Duane (15), an Irish emigrant, by means of his paper, the *Aurora*, had rendered the people of Pennsylvania dissatisfied with their form of government and stirred up a desire to change the Constitution. In all the evils and bickerings of party, I had never apprehended equal mischiefs to this. The former disputes between those in and those out of office I had received with indifference to what I did. Duane and his party, in order to obtain power, endeavored to unhinge every social tie and give the reign to anarchy. This daring attempt I exposed in a letter to my constituents which went the round of all the newspapers and brought out the whole fury of anarchy upon me; but I had the consolation that my letter stood the test, and instead of confuting my arguments they only answered me with personal abuse and torrents of scurrility.

In 1805, Gov. McKean tendered me the position of Registrar General to succeed Mr. Duffield. I hesitated, but at length accepted. Then I began to calculate the cost of living at Lancaster. This should have been a preparatory step, but it was too late to refuse, and I found the expense would swallow up the whole salary, \$1,333 per year. We determined that the family should remain at Palmyra, in Dauphin county, and that my public life should end with the present Governor's time. Having in public life seen a little of the world, I can now with certainty pronounce that the post of honor is a private station; and now I can with calm attention resurvey my transactions; and am in this retrospect, so happy as to have the full approbation of my own conscience. Having had to mix with politicians of all sides and descriptions, my political course has been the same, and I have steadily pursued the principles which gave Freedom to America, but

have often found my course crossed by those changelings who were one day on one side and the next day something else. * * * * I am now looking with anxiety for next December, which will again restore me to the arms of my family, and from which no expectation of emolument shall again tear me, for with them I am and can be happy.

POSTSCRIPT BY MISS KEAN.—I expect father intended to finish his recollections, of which I send you some extracts.

The year he was called away, he had been all summer every leisure moment, looking over papers, and those that were of no account he burned. Others tied in packages and labeled. In 1810 the family removed to Philadelphia and commenced a wholesale grocery. Father indorsed for an old friend a shipping merchant, the ships were lost, and father's and as much of my mother's estate as could be, were taken to pay the indorsement. Then they returned to Harrisburg in the spring of 1813, rented opposite the court house where Dock's house now stands, lived there two years then moved to the house which stands between the house lately Mr. Hamilton Alricks and the house of Mr. Wm. Brady, the jeweler. Father wrote deeds and other conveyances and held the office of Justice of the Peace. His office was a frame building fronting on the court house pavement where Brant's hall now stands. One evening the last of November, 1818, as he was coming home, it had been a rainy day and the stones on the crossing at Third and Market streets, were large and round, full of ice and slippery as glass. he fell. By this accident he fractured one of his ancles. His death from this accident was from lockjaw December 9, 1818.

Harrisburg, June, 1874.

Notes.

1. CAPTAIN JOHN KEAN, born in the province of Ulster, Ireland, in 1728; emigrated in 1742, when 14 years of age, with some relatives of his family; established his business at Philadelphia about 1760; died at Harrisburg in 1801 at the age of 73. Captain Kean married in 1760 Mary Dunlap, born in 1721; came to Philadelphia 1735; died at Harrisburg in 1819, aged 98 years. Their only descendant was General John Kean, author of these reminiscences. Mr. Kean, the elder, was a tanner by trade; and many persons are yet living who were acquainted with his very aged widow, who died in the house now numbered 306, on Market, near Third street, Harrisburg.

2. ROBERT McKEE, of Derry, was an officer in the Pennsylvania militia from 1777 to 1781. He was born in what is at present Conewago township, Dauphin county, near Conewago creek, and died on a beautiful farm he owned there. He was known as "Col. McKee," as there was a cousin Robert in the same township, who was known as "Captain McKee." The first named d. in 1794; his wife Isabella Sample prior to 1816, and their children were:

i. James; d. s. p.

ii. *John*; d. s. p.

iii. *Robert*; d. s. p.

iv. *Henry*; d. s. p.

v. Sample; m. and removed to Western Pennsylvania.

vi. *Isabella*; m. David Dempsey, of Venango county.

3. JAMES CLUNIE, son of James and Elizabeth Clunie, was a native of Scotland, born in 1761. He was brought up as a merchant, and towards the close of the Revolution established himself in business with his father at Hummelstown. It is more than probable that he saw service in the war for Independence. Sometime after the death of his father he removed to Harrisburg. He was appointed October 3, 1785, collector of Excise for Dauphin county, at the same time holding the office of Agent for Forfeited Estates. He was elected sheriff, commissioned 20th October, 1788, and upon the resignation of David Harris appointed by Governor Mifflin February 23, 1792, one of the Associate Judges of the county. He died suddenly at Harrisburg September 14, 1793. Judge Clunie was an intelligent, high minded gentleman, and very popular among the people. His appointment to the Bench was warmly pressed by them against the bitter opposition of the leading politicians. The Governor, however, did not hesitate in commissioning Mr. Clunie. He resided at the corner of Front and Walnut streets at his death. This property is now the residence of James McCormick, Esq.

This lot was numbered 49, and extended from Front street to River alley. The following is a copy of the settlement made with the executors of Harris:

"Jame Clunie, to Lott No. 49,	
April 14, 1785, Dr.	£100.0.0
To interest thereon to the present	
time, being 7 years.....	42.0.0

£142.0.0

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Credit Mr. Clunie with the balance on account, this day exhibited, against the estate of John Harris, deceased.	8.2.6
	£133.18.0

June 27, 1792.

[Signed in a fine open hand.]

JAMES CLUNIE."

The original cost of the lot was \$266 67. Gen. Hanna, William Maclay, Alexander Graydon, Adam Boyd, Andrew Gregg all spelled lot with a double "t," and balance with double "l."

4. ROBERT WHITEHILL, b. July 24, 1735, in Salisbury township, Lancaster county, Penna; d. April 8, 1813, in Pennsboro' township, Cumberland county, son of James and Rachel (Cresswell) Whitehill. He was a pupil of the Rev. Robert Smith, who was called to preach at Pequea church in the year 1750, purchased a farm adjoining the Whitehills and established a classical school. Robert was also a pupil of Rev. Francis Alison's school at New London Cross Roads. About the year 1772 he removed to Cumberland county two miles west of Harrisburg, the site of the present orphans' school, where he resided until his death. He married in 1757, Eleanor Reed, daughter of Adam Reed, Esq., of Hanover; they had eight children, of whom *Mary* m. Judge Kean, *Rachel* m. Alexander MacBeth, and *Elizabeth* m. Richard M. Crain. Mr. Whitehill in 1779 represented his county in the Snpreme Executive Council, and in 1784 chosen to the General Assembly. He was a member of the Pennsylvania Convention to ratify the Federal Constitution, of which instrument he was one of the most formidable opponents, and one of the leaders in the Harrisburg conference of 1788. He was a fluent speaker, logical and forcible, and it is to be regretted that his remarks during the debates were not reported by Lloyd, who seems only to have taken down the remarks of those favorable to the Constitution. Mr. Whitehill served in the Council of Censors and as a delegate to the first and second Constitutional conventions of the State. Under that of 1790 he was elected member of the House of Representatives from 1797 to 1801, of the Senate from 1801 to 1804, of which latter body he was speaker. In 1805 he was elected to Congress, and continued to be a member thereof until his death. His remains are interred in Silvers Spring Presbyterian graveyard.

5. Mr. Kean was a member of "the Harrisburg Conference" in September, 1788, which suggested many amendments to the Constitution of the United States. Most of them were adopted in a few years, and gave the Constitution the popularity which it has since enjoyed. This conference was composed of experienced and educated gentlemen from most of the counties of the State. Amongst its members were Findley of Westmoreland, Whitehill of 'umberland, Smilie of Washington, Gallatin of Fayette, Hanna and Kean of Dauphin, and Bryan and McClenachan of Philadelphia, all gentlemen of acknowledged ability.

6. Mr. Kean was the second treasurer of the Presbyterian congregation, president of the first fire company, an original manager of the Library company, and after the death of John Harris and John Hamilton a trustee of the Harrisburg Academy with Adam Boyd and Dr. John Luther.

7. ALEXANDER BERRYHILL, son of Andrew Berryhill, was born in Paxtang township, Lancaster, now Dauphin county, in 1738. He secured a good education, served in the war of the Revolution, and was prominent and influential in the organization of the new county of Dauphin. He became one of the first residents of Harrisburg on its being laid out in 1785, and after its incorporation as a borough he was appointed one of its justices of the peace by Gov. Mifflin. He was one of the burgesses of the town in 1794, and signed the address to President Washington on his way westward to quell the so-called Whiskey Insurrection. He died at Harrisburg September 7, 1798 at the age of sixty years. Mr. Berryhill was an excellent penman and many of his papers still extant are models of chirography.

8. JOHN HAMILTON, the only child of John Hamilton and Jane Allen, daughter of Robert Allen, was born in Chester county in 1749; married Margaret, daughter of Hon. Hugh Alexander, born 1754, married 1772. Mr. Hamilton was one of the earliest purchasers from Harris. Erected a store house on the line of what is now known as Mulberry street, between Second and Third streets, as early as 1770; was the first who, on a well organized system, "packed over the mountains" to Pittsburg; a captain of horse in the Revolution; farmer, merchant, miller, in everything enthusiastic, energetic, intelligent. His education was good, his judgment clear; in per-

son erect, quite six feet in height; a florid, handsome man. His residence was on Front street, corner of Blackberry alley, having paid the high price of £120 for his lot March 3, 1786. Three days after his opposite neighbor, Henry Fulton, paid a like amount for his. Harris notes these transactions as unusual, as both fee and ground rent were extinguished in a single payment. His estate is rated on the Mill Purchase £53 14. He died and is buried at Harrisburg. This marriage of Mr. Kean, made him brother-in-law to John and Hugh Hamilton, Moses Maclean, James Alricks, Jacob Spangler, all prominent and respectable gentlemen.

9. JOHN ELDER was the second son of the Rev. John Elder, of Paxtang, b. August 3, 1757, d. April 27, 1811, and is buried in Paxtang church graveyard. He served in the Revolution as an ensign in Col. Burd's battalion; was deputy surveyor in 1780, and sheriff of Dauphin county from 1794 to 1797. He was an enterprising man, erecting the first steel plant in this State at Middletown, but like the forge it did not prove a successful business. His wife was Elizabeth Awl, daughter of Jacob Awl, of Paxtang.

10. ROBERT HARRIS, son of John Harris the founder of Harrisburg, was born at Harris' Ferry, Sept. 5, 1768, and d. there Sept. 3, 1851. He filled various positions of honor, apart from the commission referred to by Mr. Kean. During the war of 1812-14, he was paymaster of the Pennsylvania troops, and upon the removal of the State government from Lancaster was one of the commissioners for fixing the location of the Capitol buildings at Harrisburg. He served in Congress two terms from 1823 to 1827. He was one of the most active and energetic men of his day, was possessed of great public spirit and aided in the establishment of various enterprises, including the bridge over the Susquehanna, the Harrisburg Bank, and several turnpike companies.

* 12. MICHAEL KAPP was an early lot holder. He resided on Market square, where Mr. Zollinger's hat store is at present, and there died. He must not be confounded with a gentleman of similar name, a nail maker, on the corner of the square and Strawberry alley.

12. Mr. Graydon speaks of this occurrence in his "Memoirs," as follows:

"The Western Expedition, as it was called, gave me an opportunity of seeing a number of my old friends from Philadelphia; and it afforded also a momentary triumph to

the poor handful of Harrisburg federalists, who were stated by their opponents to amount to only five.

"A French flag, which had been flying at the Court House, then building, had been the cause of some squabbling in the newspapers; and this flag was peremptorily ordered to be taken down by the troops from the city. Had I been disposed for revenge, I might, upon this occasion, have been fully gratified, as I was repeatedly asked who had caused it to be put up, and impliedly censured for giving evasive answers to the questions, which, from their manner, evinced a disposition to treat the authors much more roughly than would have been agreeable to me.

"Conspicuous among the crowd that rolled on to the eastward was Gov. Mifflin. On the day of his arrival he convened the people at the market house and gave them an animated harangue, in which there was nothing exceptionable, save a monstrous suggestion that the British had stirred up the discontents to the westward, and been the cause of the present opposition to the Government.

"A few days after the Governor, and Gen. Washington, accompanied by Col. Hamilton, came on. After waiting on them, I prevailed upon the Burgesses to present an address to the President, which I sketched out, and which, from the cordiality of the answer, appeared to have been well received."

13. THOMAS PROCTOR, eldest son of Francis Proctor was a native of Ireland b. in 1739. His father emigrated to America about 1750, locating in Philadelphia, where the son pursued the occupation of a carpenter, in which business he was actively engaged when the war for independence began. He at once espoused the patriot cause and in 1775 commanded an artillery company, subsequently promoted to major and to colonel of the Fourth regiment of artillery, Penn'a Line. His services during the Revolution were eminently patriotic and valuable. During the Whiskey Insurrection he was placed in command of the First Brigade of the Penn'a forces. In 1796 he was commissioned a Major General of the militia. He also served as sheriff of Philadelphia from 1783 to 1785, and in 1790 City Lieutenant. In 1791 he was commissioned by the Secretary of War to undertake a mission to the Six Nations in New York. General Proctor died at Philadelphia March 16th, 1807, aged 67 years.

14. FRANCIS GURNEY was a native of

Bucks county, Penna., where he was born in 1738. He entered mercantile life, and became a successful merchant in Philadelphia. When the Revolution opened, having served as a volunteer in the French and Indian war, he was commissioned a captain, and afterwards promoted to lieutenant colonel in the Eleventh regiment of the Penn'a Line. He served with honor and distinction throughout the war. On the restoration of peace, in 1783, he resumed his mercantile pursuits, which he continued until within a year or two of his death. He also served in various civil offices, Warden of the Port, Alderman of the city, member of the Assembly, etc. He was commissioned Colonel of the First Regiment of the Philadelphia Brigade in 1786, and acting as such was in service during the Whiskey Insurrection. He died on the 25th of May, 1815.

14. BENJAMIN MAYER issued the *Harrisburg Zeitung* in March, 1794, a German paper which soon became a prime factor in the social and political life of the town. Mayer was a vigorous politician, wielding considerable personal influence, although he never held office. His office was at the southeast corner of Chestnut street and Dewberry alley. He was the son of Isaac and Catharine Mayer, and died at Harrisburg May 18, 1824, in his 62d year.

15. WILLIAM DUANE was a native of the State of New York where he was born in 1760 and died in Philadelphia in 1835. A man of vigorous mind, bold and facile pen, of fine culture and high social position. He was editor of the *Aurora*, at Philadelphia, the mouth piece of President Jefferson, and the leading political journal of the country—certainly of this State, at the moment of which Kean writes.

FAMILY RECORD.—In connection with the foregoing autobiography, it is proper to give the following, derived principally from a Bible belonging to John Kean, Jr.:

John Kean, Sen'r., was born at Ballymony, in the Kingdom of Ireland, the 5th day of July, 1728, and came into Pennsylvania about 14 years of age. Died at Harrisburg 23th May, 1801, aged 73 years.

Mary Dunlap, his wife, was born in Ireland, near Cloiher, in the year 1721, and came into Pennsylvania at about 22 years of age. Died July 9th, 1819, aged 98 years.

John Kean was born in the city of Philadelphia, October 3d, A. D. 1762. Died at Harrisburg December 9th, A. D. 1818, aged 56 years, two months and 6 days.

Mary, the daughter of Robert and Eleanor Whitehill, of Cumberland County, in Pennsylvania, was born Feb'y 7, 1762; on 1st May, 1786, was married to John Kean; and died Sept. 11th, 1787, leaving one daughter named Eleanor.

Eleanor Kean was born at Harrisburg, in Penn'a, Feb'y 1st, 1787, and died May 30th, 1865, at Hummelstown, aged 78 years, 3 months, and 30 days.

Jane Hamilton, the second wife of John Kean, was a daughter of Capt. John Hamilton, was born in Cumberland, now Juniata, County, Penn'a, June 1st, 1774; and died at Harrisburg, March 20th, 1847, aged 72 years, 9 months, and 20 days.

John Hamilton Kean was born at Harrisburg, the 21st day of January, 1795, and died of the smallpox 14th of July, 1795.

Mary Kean was born at Harrisburg, February 21st, 1797, and died 21st April, 1803, aged 6 years and 2 months.

Louisa Kean was born at New Market Forge, in Dauphin county, Penna., July 30th, 1799.

Margaret Matilda Kean was born at Palmstown, in the county of Dauphin, February 17th, 1806; joined the Presbyterian church in Harrisburg on the 7th or 14th of July, 1850, and died at Harrisburg on the 11th of October, 1855.

Jane Kean was born at Palmyra, Dauphin county, January 3d, 1809; was baptized in infancy by the Rev. James Sharon, of Derry; a Presbyterian in the church in Harrisburg, under the care of Rev. W. R. DeWitt, November, 1833; and was baptized in the Susquehanna river by the Rev. William McFadden, August 13th, 1847, and gave in her name, Jane Duffield Kean.

To the foregoing, the following information is added:

Eleanor Whitehill Kean married Dr. William Patton, of Derry township, Dauphin county and had issue:

Mary Patton married James Clarke, of Hummelstown; died without issue.

Eleanor married, secondly, Christian Spayd, of Hummelstown; had descendants. All died without issue except Mary Eleanor Spayd, who married John Metz, a merchant of Chambersburg.

Louisa Kean married Gen. Samuel Power, of Beaver county; had a daughter, who died young.

No descendants of Jane Hamilton and John Kean survive.

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